



## A219 Exploring the Classical World

# Audio-visual notes 1

Prepared by the A219 course team

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## Introduction

This booklet contains notes on the audio-visual material associated with the first part of the course, the Course Introduction and Blocks 1 and 2: that is, CDs 1, 2 and 3 and DVDs 1 and 2. The remaining CDs and DVDs will be discussed in Audio-visual notes 2. These booklets provide supplementary information that you should consult before watching or listening to a CD or DVD. However, they are not designed as self-standing sources of information. In many cases, the most important information regarding the audio-visual material – in particular explanations of how particular sections or tracks fit into the overall teaching material – is given in the blocks, and the notes are in some cases little more than lists of tracks and titles. You will be directed to specific tracks of a CD or section of a DVD as you work through the material in the blocks. Obviously, you may wish to return to certain sections and tracks at a later stage, but it is probably best to watch or listen to them for the first time only when you reach the point in the course that prompts you to do so.

Please note that the DVDs are designed for viewing with a DVD player. You may also watch them on a computer with DVD video software, but may find for technical reasons that the keyboard operates them faster than the mouse.

## CD1, 'Reading the Homeric texts and Homer in translation'

Presenters: Chris Emlyn-Jones and Naoko Yamagata

Readers: Lucie Fitchett and Leighton Pugh

Producer: David Blount

## Tracks 1–18: Reading the Homeric texts

### Track 1: Introduction

**Tracks 2–13:** Readings and critical analysis of passages from the *Odyssey*

Tracks 2–3: *Odyssey* 4.1–58

Tracks 4–6: *Odyssey* 4.703–41

Tracks 7–8: *Odyssey* 4.787–94

Tracks 9–13: *Odyssey* 5.282–332

### Track 14: Conclusion

Suggested pieces from *Odyssey*, Books 1–4, for analysis in a self-help group or at a tutorial (or for private study):

1.150–68

1.420–44

2.303–30

2.413–34

3.404–29

4.120–46

4.675–95



## Tracks 15–18: Appendix: the rhythm of the Homeric line

### Track 16: *Odyssey*, Book 1, lines 1–5

#### Line 1

- ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~  
*andra moi ennepe Mousa polutropon hos mala polla*  
man to me tell, Muse, of many ways who very much

#### Line 2

- ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~  
*plangchthe epei Troies hieron ptoliethron eperse;*  
wandered when Troy's holy citadel he sacked

#### Line 3

- - | - - | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - -  
*pollon d' anthropon iden astea kai noon egno,*  
of many men he saw cities and minds he got to know

#### Line 4

- ~ ~ | - - | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~  
*polla d' ho g' en pontoι pathen algea hon kata thumon*  
but many he on the sea suffered pains in his spirit

#### Line 5

- ~ ~ | - - | - - | - - | - ~ ~ | - -  
*arnumenos hen te psuchen kai noston hetairon*  
striving to gain his own life and the return home of his companions.

## Tracks 19–30: Homer in translation

### Tracks 19–20: Introduction

Tracks 21–23: Reading and critical analysis of *Odyssey*, Book 1, lines 1–5,  
translated by Richmond Lattimore

Tracks 24–26: Reading and critical analysis of *Odyssey*, Book 1, lines 1–5,  
translated by Walter Shewring.

GODDESS of song, teach me the story of a hero.

This was the man of wide-ranging spirit who had sacked the sacred town of Troy and who wandered afterwards long and far. Many were those whose cities he viewed and whose minds he came to know, many the troubles that vexed his heart as he sailed the seas, labouring to save himself and to bring his comrades home.

(Homer, *The Odyssey*, in Shewring, W. (trans.) (1980) Oxford: Oxford University Press)



Tracks 27–28: Reading and critical analysis of *The Odyssey of Homer*, Book 1, lines 1–5, translated by Alexander Pope (1688–1744).

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,  
Long exercised in woes, O Muse! resound;  
Who, when his arms had wrought the destined fall  
Of sacred Troy, and razed her heaven-built wall,  
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd,  
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.  
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,  
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore.

(*The Odyssey of Homer*, in A. Pope (trans.) (1925[1725]) Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Tracks 29–30: Reading of Derek Walcott (1993) *The Odyssey: A Stage Version*, London: Faber and Faber.

Note on the author: Derek Walcott (b.1930 in St Lucia) is a poet and dramatist. His long poem *Omeros* celebrates Homeric themes in a Caribbean setting. A stage version of the *Odyssey* for the Royal Shakespeare Company was performed in Stratford in 1992. Walcott is the winner of the 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature.

*Act One: Prologue*

(*Sound of surf*)

BILLY BLUE (*sings*)

Gone sing 'bout that man because his stories please us,  
Who saw trials and tempests for ten years after Troy.

I'm Blind Billy Blue, my main man's sea-smart Odysseus,  
Who the God of the Sea drove crazy and tried to destroy.

Andra moi ennepe mousa polutropon hos mala polla ...  
The shuttle of the sea moves back and forth on this line,

All night, like the surf, she shuttles and doesn't fall  
Asleep, then her rosy fingers at dawn unstitch the design.

When you hear this chord

(*Chord*)

Look for a swallow's wings,  
A swallow arrowing seaward like a messenger

Passing smoke-blue islands, happy that the kings  
Of Troy are going home and its ten years' siege is over.

So my blues drifts like smoke from the fire of that war,  
Cause once Achilles was ashes, things sure fell apart.

Slow-striding Achilles, who put the hex on Hector  
A swallow twitters in Troy. That's where we start.

(*Exit*)



## CD2, 'Aeschylus: *Persians*'

Cast:

### *Persian Elders:*

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1 | John Evitts     |
| 2 | Ian Masters     |
| 3 | Barry J. Gordon |

*Queen Atossa* Elizabeth Morgan

*Messenger* Leighton Pugh

*Dareios* David Collings

*Xerxes* Alex Hutchinson

Music: Neil Brand

Director and producer: David Blount

Academic consultant: Felix Budelmann

CD2 is part of your work for Block 2, Part 1. It contains an audio-production of Aeschylus' play, *Persians*. The translation is by Edith Hall, and it is reprinted in Readings Book 1. The play is broken down into tracks as follows:

Track 1, lines 1–149

Track 2, lines 150–245

Track 3, lines 246–597

Track 4, lines 598–680

Track 5, lines 681–851

Track 6, lines 852–906

Track 7, lines 907–end

This audio-production was made specifically for our course and needed to follow the translation printed in Readings Book 1. Consequently the director David Blount was unable to make the kinds of cuts or changes to the translation which he might have chosen to make for a free-standing broadcast production. However, he had to make certain decisions because no production – audio, video or theatre – can avoid all interpretation.

One particular area in which decisions had to be made was music. As discussed in the course material, in fifth-century BCE drama, some passages (both solo and choral) would have been sung to the accompaniment of an *aulos* player. This kind of performance style is difficult to reproduce today, and would certainly have a rather different effect on contemporary audiences who are not used to drama being partly spoken and partly sung. Moreover, Greek tragedy drew on particular kinds of ritual traditions, such as sung or chanted communal female lament (interestingly, transmuted into *male* communal lament in *Persians*, something rather unusual in real-life Athens). With such contexts alien to most modern spectators, a straightforward recreation of ancient musical effects would be impossible.

Therefore, in this audio-production the words are spoken throughout, but music is used in certain places. The composer and performer of this music, Neil Brand, sets out below how he went about composing the music. His notes illustrate the sorts of challenges faced in turning ancient material into modern productions. Before you read his notes, you might ask yourself what sort of music *you* would find appropriate for a modern audio-production of *Persians*. (The issue of modern productions will reappear later in Block 2, in connection with Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*).



## Neil Brand's notes on his music for *Persians*

In writing this score I was principally aware of the need to help listeners to 'visualise' the story. Yes, it is a story from ancient Greece; yes, it has a structure and intent which differs starkly from our modern dramatic fare; but the process of understanding the play is still reliant on the spoken word and as a modern-day composer I feel my responsibility is very much to the audience of today hearing this play for the first time. In coming to the project for the first time, the combination of budgetary restrictions and David Blount's directorial requirements set limits to the musical framework (always a real spur to creativity!) and made me prioritise my goals. I could never reproduce the Greek theatrical experience (whatever that, musically, may have been) but I could utilise sounds and my long experience as a radio drama composer to bring to life some of the pictures embedded in the words.

As a composer I initially approach a work as a whole on much the same terms as a literary critic. What is the central idea behind the work? How does it work, this idea through the narrative? Where are the main plot twists? In what historic and geographical environments does the play take place? From this graphic analysis one can begin to put together the prime moments that will need music and some idea of what that music will be. David had set out specific points that he wanted covered and a visit to the studios to hear the read-through also gave me the chance to see where music could underscore speech, evolving with the changing moods. This would have the effect of turning speeches into mini-arias, operatic in tone but still theatrical and in keeping with the requirements of the text.

The major problem I had to overcome as a composer, it seemed to me, was the unchanging nature of the narrative – the play was not a series of dramatic incidents but a dramatised meditation on the themes of loss, grief and regret. The play's dramatic arc gave us characters that began the play supremely confident in the power of their armies (albeit with an undertone of concern), passed through the stunning shock of hearing of the armies' destruction, and were left finally in the comparative tranquillity of grief, regret and self-accusation. This gave me my 'musical journey'. The music, like the play, constantly refers backwards and forwards over the characters' early contentment to their final realisation of grief, objectively commenting whilst attempting to bind the whole narrative together.

Woven through that narrative are many allusions to fate (particularly the hubris of Xerxes' challenge to the gods), the tragic dimension of all Greek drama. Fate, I felt, should be a desert snake – when it is talked of, we hear its sinister rattle – it is the first sound we hear in the play. Otherwise the music supports, from moment to moment, the procession of powerful elements of the play – first Persia itself, then Xerxes striding all-powerful across the Bosphorus, then Queen Atossa, the messenger's dreadful news, the rituals of grief and finally the defeated Xerxes himself. So the music evolves from heavy menace to percussion-driven violence, to thoughtful loss, to grand outpourings of grief.

Whilst using some Eastern instruments (particularly the doholla, a drum similar to the tabla and the shahnai, an Arabic reed instrument) to give a specific locale, I wanted the evolving 'melody of regret' to be one which could be recognised from any of the last 100 years of western classical music. The themes of *Persians* are universal and whilst the Persia of yesterday is all too relevantly the Iran of today, I felt a mix of 'ethnic' instruments and the filmic breadth/English pastoral style (my native musical tongue) would draw fruitfully from both cultures and embrace the specific as well as the universal. As grief becomes solidified in the play I added a human voice – cries which have a feel of the *muezzin* but also sound distant, echoed, from another time. Finally the music grows in volume and texture into a grand lament of its own which takes over entirely as the play finishes.



## CD3, 'Funeral speeches ancient and modern'

Presenter: Lorna Hardwick

Readers: Kevin Murphy and Leighton Pugh

Producer: David Blount

CD3 is part of your work for Block 2, Part 3. It starts by presenting readings of primary sources that support your study of the Funeral Speech (the *Epitaphios Logos*) which the Athenian historian Thucydides attributed to the Athenian leader Pericles. Thucydides made the occasion of the speech a major episode in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The speech was delivered on the occasion of the public funeral for those killed in action in the first year of the war between the Athenians and Spartans. It is important not only because of the historical context – it provides evidence about Athenian social and political practices and the establishment of a *polis* tradition for the honouring of the war-dead – but also for its subsequent influence.

The claims made in the speech about the Athenian way of life, their cultural achievements, their democracy, and the rhetoric which is used to justify Athenian exercise of power over other states, have been widely accepted as a snapshot of what Athens was like at the height of its powers in the fifth century BCE. Yet, as Thucydides' *History* shows, Pericles' position at the time was under threat, the Attic countryside had been ravaged by the Spartans and those wanting peace had been vociferous. Furthermore, Athens was about to experience a devastating plague and, after various triumphs and disasters, was eventually defeated by the Spartans. This resulted in a temporary overthrow of the democracy at the end of the fifth century, and although it was soon restored and the Athenians recovered to some extent, they never regained their former supremacy in Greece.

So the Funeral Speech can be analysed and interpreted from a number of perspectives and you will be able to work on this in Block 2. On CD3, we concentrate on the rhetoric of the spoken word and its impact. You will also be able to compare Pericles' Funeral Speech with other ancient approaches to the same genre, and listen to some modern examples of public oratory in comparable contexts.

The reading of Pericles' speech is in the translation from the Greek by Richard Crawley, published in 1874 (there is a note on Crawley in Reading 2.9 of Readings Book 1). Crawley's translation was revised by R.C. Feetham in 1903 and has been used extensively ever since. We have chosen to use it on this course because of its sensitivity to the structure and nuances of Thucydides' Greek and also because its slightly archaic tone usefully distances the text from the present day, reminding us that the ancient Greeks and their ideas often seem, paradoxically, to be both close to us and distant.

After the introduction (Track 1) a reading of the whole of the *Epitaphios* follows. As you listen, notice the way in which Thucydides characteristically provides a very short narrative introduction and conclusion to give the episode its context and to locate it in the chronology of the war. Listen, too, for the words and phrases in which Pericles proclaims Athenian social and political values and unity and especially for the way he defines and proclaims this in contrast with 'outsiders'. Primarily these outsiders are Spartan, but can you also pick up some swipes against those Athenians who were less than supportive? See what you think. There is detailed discussion of this in Block 2, Part 3.



## **Track 1: Introduction**

### **Tracks 2–15: Thucydides Book 2.34–47**

- Track 2: 2.34
- Track 3: 2.35
- Track 4: 2.36
- Track 5: 2.37
- Track 6: 2.38
- Track 7: 2.39
- Track 8: 2.40
- Track 9: 2.41
- Track 10: 2.42
- Track 11: 2.43
- Track 12: 2.44
- Track 13: 2.45
- Track 14: 2.46
- Track 15: 2.47

### **Track 16: Introduction to Gorgias**

The next reading is from a fragmentary Funeral Speech attributed to Gorgias, the Sicilian rhetorician. Unlike Pericles, he was not a political leader but a travelling *sophist*, that is a teacher and speech writer, who produced both commissioned speeches and models which might be publicly performed to display his talents – perhaps you can hear some elements of this in the way in which the speech is read.

Gorgias first visited Athens in 427 BCE. Some critics think that Pericles' speech in Thucydides and that attributed to Gorgias show similarities. Think about this as you listen and jot down any points that strike you. The possible comparison is discussed in Block 2, Section 3.3.

### **Track 17: Funeral Speech attributed to Gorgias**

### **Track 18: Introduction to the two readings of Thucydides, Book 2.37**

On Tracks 19 and 20 you will hear an extract from Pericles' speech in Thucydides read again, first from the page. This is Book 2.37. Then the passage will be spoken once more, by the same actor, but this time in a more obviously rhetorical style as performance, such as you might expect to hear in a public speech by a politician. Of course, we cannot assume that the style of public rhetoric that we might be familiar with today corresponds to that of Athenian public speaking and we cannot recreate for you the atmosphere and buzz of excitement and grief in the crowd at an open-air public funeral in a time of war.

The aim of having the same passage read twice is a modest one – to encourage you to think about the effect on the listener of how the words are spoken. To help with this, I suggest you make a few short notes after the first reading on Track 19, indicating what the most effective points were and how you responded to them. Then listen to the second reading, on Track 20, and repeat the exercise. Finally, compare your two sets of notes.



## Tracks 19–20: Readings of Thucydides, Book 2.37

### Track 21: Summary

This completes the readings from the *Epitaphios Logos*, Pericles' Funeral Speech in Thucydides, and from the speech attributed to Gorgias. In listening and re-listening to these readings we hope you have been able to attune your ear to the effects of Greek rhetoric – the appeal to reason and emotion of the words used; how they are combined in the overall structure, and how they are delivered. Your study in Block 2 will enable you to think about the historical context of the speech in Thucydides, to consider its purpose and to begin to evaluate the claims made in it. This aspect is discussed in Block 2, Sections 3.3 and 3.4.

### Track 22: Modern speeches

The next part of the CD introduces three speeches from the modern era, made in the context of public funerals or reburial. We have included these so that you can think about the differences and similarities between ancient and modern approaches to this kind of occasion, and can begin to use comparative material to analyse the impact of public rhetoric. You will also become aware of the persistence of some aspects of ancient Athenian rhetoric into modern political discourse. For this you will need to be quite careful in *contrasting* as well as comparing the ancient and modern texts and contexts. Differences are as important as similarities and each speech has its own history.

The first speech you will hear is the Gettysburg Address, delivered by President Abraham Lincoln on 19 November 1863, during the American Civil War, at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery on the site of the battle of Gettysburg (which had taken place in July 1863).

### Track 23: Gettysburg Address

#### Track 24: Everett's speech

The Gettysburg Address has become so famous as a statement of the principles of the Union side in the American Civil War that it is often forgotten that it was – in terms of length – just one part of a much longer ceremony, and furthermore that comparatively little attention was paid to it at the time. On Track 25 you can hear the opening section from the main speech of the ceremony, made by Edward Everett, a former president of Harvard University and a leader of the nineteenth-century American revival of interest in ancient Greece. Listen for the specific allusions to Pericles' speech and for the differences in emphasis. Everett emphasises the early fifth-century battle of Marathon, partly because the dead were interred where they fell and partly for its associations with the idea of resistance to the Persians, seen as potential destroyers of Greek culture. Pericles' emphasis was on the war with Sparta, although he did draw on the noble traditions associated with Marathon. Notice, too, in Everett's speech that the values of the Athenians are taken as examples for the present. Aspects of this tradition are still present in public political discourse in the United States in the twenty-first century (including recent references in the rhetoric surrounding President George W. Bush's aims to establish democracy in other states).

The Gettysburg speeches are discussed in Block 2, Section 3.5.



## **Track 25: Everett extract**

## **Track 26: Introduction to Ahern Speech**

Our third modern example is more recent. This is the oration made by the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of the Irish Republic, Bertie Ahern, TD, on the occasion of the Reinterment on 14 October 2001 of the Remains of Volunteers executed during the War of Independence in the early part of the twentieth century. The official title of the speech, which is reproduced in Reading 2.19 of Readings Book 1, does not mention that the men were executed by the British.

The Taoiseach's speech was a great public occasion and was televised on RTE. What you will hear is the voice of the Taoiseach recorded on that occasion. The place, Glasnevin Cemetery, has long associations with the nationalist movement in Ireland and was the scene of previous nationalist funeral orations. However, as you will hear, this speech was a carefully calculated balancing act, referring specifically to 'a unifying occasion', distancing the executed Volunteers from the later terrorists and referring positively to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 between the governments of the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. This speech is discussed in Block 2, Section 3.5. The first part of the Taoiseach's speech was made in Irish and a short extract from this is included on Track 27. The full speech, in English, is on Track 28.

## **Track 27: The beginning of Ahern's speech in Irish**

This is an extract of the recording of Ahern's speech. At the time of writing, the complete Irish text was available on the Taoiseach's website: <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie> (last accessed 12 September 2005).

## **Track 28: Ahern's complete speech in English**

## **Track 29: Introduction to the Menexenus extract**

So far, the tone of the readings has been serious, even sombre. Our last reading takes us back to ancient Athens and introduces a possible note of critique and irony. On Track 30 you will hear a short extract from the philosophical dialogue *Menexenus*, which is often attributed to Plato, although the authorship is far from certain. Menexenus was a pupil of Socrates and was one of those present during Socrates' last days in prison before he was executed for impiety by the restored Athenian democracy in 399 BCE. The dialogue named after Menexenus is an example of a 'Socratic' dialogue: that is, a philosophical conversation in which Socrates is the main character and questions the views of others, rather than declaring his own. The effect philosophically is often to challenge conventional assumptions. If the same is true of the activities of the historical Socrates, then this may have played a part in provoking his trial and execution at the hands of the restored but still angry and insecure democracy.

As you listen to the short extract, notice how the discussion of the conventions of public funeral speeches for the war-dead may be ironical, even an attack on 'spin', and how Pericles' speech is debunked by being attributed to his companion Aspasia (well educated, not Athenian and female). Since the dialogue was not composed until c.380 BCE, this suggests that the fame of Pericles' oration had persisted long after its delivery at the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War, 431/0 BCE. The historical value of the source is discussed in Block 2, Section 3.3.



### Track 30: Menexenus/Socrates

### Track 31: Conclusion

This ends the 'close listening' part of your work for the Block 2 study of Pericles' *Epitaphios Logos*. I hope you have enjoyed experiencing something of the variety of content and tone in Athenian rhetoric and have been able to tease out some of the ways in which seemingly straightforward speech also reveals some of the underlying tensions in the social and political context. The examples on this CD also demonstrate that the significance of classical subjects is not confined to the study of the ancient world but has a much broader role in the arts and humanities. The ways in which Greek (and indeed Roman) texts and contexts have been interpreted, adapted and appropriated in later situations shed light on key aspects of culture and politics right up to the present day.



## **DVD1, Section 1, 'Course introduction'**

Voiceover: Paula James

Interviews with: Felix Budelmann, Chris Emlyn-Jones, James Robson, Phil Perkins and Val Hope

Producer: John Wyver

You should watch this section of the DVD during your work on the Course Introduction. It consists of a single track and is designed to give you an initial impression of the most important topics and questions that you will study in the course. Most of the material included here will appear in later, more narrowly focused, DVD sections and there is no need to identify it in detail at this stage.

## **DVD1, Section 2, 'Art and architecture of the Greek "Dark Age"'**

Presenter: Robin Osborne, Professor of Ancient History, University of Cambridge

Academic consultant: Chris Emlyn-Jones

Producer: John Wyver

This DVD programme is the first of a series related to the various blocks of the course that focus on the material culture of the ancient world. It should be studied when you reach Block 1, Part 4, where you will find guidance on how to use it. It contains material that you will need to study if you decide to answer the second option in TMA 02 (to be completed at the end of Block 1). It is also essential for your work on Part 5 of Block 1, and you should study it before you reach that part of the block. Working on DVD1, Section 2, and its associated exercises represents a full week's work, so these notes are more extensive than those for later blocks where the DVD material is integrated throughout the block material.

DVD1, Section 2, consists of six tracks: a short introduction, followed by five tracks, each dealing with an aspect of the material culture of the period in which the Homeric poems were composed. The tracks are as follows:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Architecture of the 'Dark Age'
- 3 Votive objects
- 4 Geometric vases and society
- 5 Homer and Geometric vases
- 6 Myth and narrative

On each track Robin Osborne introduces a variety of evidence which he uses to focus on different aspects of the material culture of the eighth and early seventh century in Greece – the age of Homer. The tracks were shot at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, where most of the objects which he discusses are housed. On Track 6 there is also a short sequence in the Museum at Eleusis (a small town to the north-west of Athens).

### **Suggested method of study**

The tracks are thematically linked to a developing argument, but each has its own focus; you are therefore free to view them all in sequence or separately. You may



find it useful to run through this whole section of the DVD (it lasts in total approximately 40 minutes) in order to grasp the overall picture, and then return to the individual tracks in an order that suits you and your particular interests. You should also make use of the pause and forward/back controls on your player to study objects carefully or recap an argument. On the DVD Robin Osborne concentrates on a small number of objects (captioned on the screen), and you should give these special attention.

*Before playing any of the tracks you should read its relevant preamble printed below before viewing, and then refer to the questions and discussions afterwards. These are intended to help clarify and reinforce the argument for you and make you familiar with the evidence used. Please try to frame an answer to the questions before reading the discussions, replaying the tracks if necessary.*

Note: the discussions below are intended to function merely as aides mémoires and are no substitute for viewing the material on the DVD.

### References to the evidence

The objects seen on the tracks will be listed at the end of the notes for each of Tracks 2–6, and can be located via the timecodes (some of the significant objects will be asterisked and the most significant objects will be asterisked twice). The timecode will refer to the first time an object appears. The objects are from the Athens Archaeological Museum unless otherwise stated.

## Track 2: Architecture of the ‘Dark Age’

This track, concerned mainly with architecture but also showing other objects, is concerned with the external evidence for dating the Homeric poems.

### After viewing the track

#### Question

What three objects does Robin Osborne discuss which may be significant for dating the Homeric poems, and why?

#### Discussion

- 1 Gorgon shield: mentioned in Homer *Iliad* 11.32–37, a scene in which the Greek hero Agamemnon arms himself for battle (the Gorgon was a mythical monster whose stare turned people to stone):

And he took up the man-enclosing elaborate stark shield,  
a thing of splendour. There were ten circles of bronze upon it,  
and set about it were twenty knobs of tin, pale-shining,  
and in the very centre another knob of dark cobalt.  
And circled in the midst of all was the blank-eyed face of the Gorgon  
with her stare of horror, and Fear was inscribed on it, and Terror.

(*The Iliad of Homer* in R. Lattimore (trans.) (1961) Chicago and London: Chicago University Press)

What makes this significant is that Gorgon shields are not found in Greek art until the seventh century BCE, making it likely that at least this part of the *Iliad* dates from in or around the beginning of the seventh century (please note that this is ‘likely’, not certain: it is always possible that some earlier artefact has not survived).



- 2 Greek dwellings: compare the remains of the palaces of Knossos and Mycenae with the plans and reconstructions of the ninth-century BCE chieftain's house at Nichoria.

*Now read The Odyssey, 4.71–75 and 7.82–102 in your set book. Which of the visual sources most resembles the Homeric descriptions, and so might be useful for dating the poems?*

The answer is neither visual source is very close. The Homeric description is based on a fantasy elaboration of what the poet imagined Homeric houses to be like, based partly on what he knew (the simple houses of the 'Dark Age') and what he imagined (maybe a memory of what he had heard about the great structures of the late Bronze Age), on the assumption that, like the heroes of the poems, everything was bigger and better in the past.

- 3 Geometric pottery: the designs on Geometric pots evolve consistently over time, being divided by modern art historians into Early, Middle and Late Geometric (with subdivisions within these categories). This gives us the only clear way of charting the development of settlement in the 'Dark Age' with any accuracy. This is most clearly demonstrated on one site – the Kerameikos cemetery at Athens, which is the most important site in Greece for pots associated with human burials. They do not help *directly* with dating Homer (but for indirect inferences from pots to poems, see the notes on Track 5).

### Objects seen on this track

- 00:46 \*Gorgon sculpture, Museo Archaeologico, Syracuse, seventh century BCE
- 02:08 Lion Gate, Mycenae, thirteenth century BCE
- 02:33 Plan of a 'village chieftains's' house, Nichoria, ninth century BCE
- 02:46 Drawing reconstruction of a 'Dark Age' house, ninth century BCE
- 03:44 Archaeological remains at Nichoria, ninth century BCE
- 04:06 Early Geometric amphora from Kerameikos, c.900–850 BCE.  
Late Geometric amphora from Kerameikos, Kerameikos Museum.  
Museum no.576. c.760–750 BCE

### Track 3: Votive objects

Votive objects are gifts to the gods found in graves. This track considers the relationship between humans and gods as revealed in the evidence of objects dedicated to the gods in the Kerameikos cemetery at Athens and elsewhere.

#### After viewing the track

##### Question

How do the different objects shown in this track demonstrate the way in which humans perceived themselves, in particular in relation to the gods?

##### Discussion

- 1 Large objects such as cauldrons are prestigious, luxury objects which demonstrate the wealth of the givers both to the gods and their fellow humans.



- 2 Small figurines of horses in bronze demonstrate prestige in another way: compared with cattle, horses are relatively useless in everyday life; they signify expenditure and aristocratic display by the family of the dead person.
- 3 Other objects have a different significance: bronze centaurs (mythical creatures, half man, half horse) suggest a leap of the imagination towards the construction of stories based on non-existent, mythical creatures.
- 4 Figurines of humans – individually differentiated with respect to features, stance, hair, clothing, hand gestures – indicate an increasing awareness of humans as individuals in relation to the gods.
- 5 Phoenician bowls are of great importance (in the poems as well as in visual art) showing the influence of the Near East via Phoenician traders.

### Objects seen on this track

- |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 00:34   | Remains of the Argive Heraion Sanctuary, eighth century BCE.<br>Remains of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, seventh century BCE                                 |
| 01:29   | Tripod bronze cauldron from Olympia, Olympia Museum. Museum no.B1240, eighth century BCE                                                                       |
| 02:40   | *Bronze votive horse from Olympia. Museum no.6206, eighth century BCE                                                                                          |
| 03:00   | *Bronze votive horse from Sparta. Museum no.6555, eighth century BCE                                                                                           |
| 03:07   | *Bronze mare and foal from Argos. Museum no.6199, eighth century BCE.                                                                                          |
| 03:49   | *Bronze votive horse from Phocis. Museum no.15473, eighth century BCE                                                                                          |
| 04:09   | *Bronze votive centaur from Argos. Museum no.6188, eighth century BCE                                                                                          |
| 05:49ff | **Three bronze votive human figurines from the Acropolis, Athens. Museum no.s 6179 from Olympia, 6613 and 6616 from the Athenian Acropolis, eighth century BCE |
| 07:20   | *Phoenician bronze bowl from Olympia. Museum no.7941. Early seventh century BCE                                                                                |
| 08:19   | *Phoenician bronze bowl from Idaian cave, Crete. Museum no.11672. Early seventh century BCE                                                                    |
| 09:00   | *Ivory votive statuette from Dipylon cemetery, Athens. Museum no.776. Late eighth century BCE                                                                  |

### Track 4: Geometric vases and society

This track concentrates chiefly on a single major object: the monumental Late Geometric amphora from the Dipylon cemetery at Athens (c.725 BCE). Robin Osborne considers what the pot and its decoration can tell us about the society which made and dedicated it.

#### After viewing the track

#### Question

What three different aspects of late eighth-century BCE Athenian society are revealed by an interpretation of the Dipylon Amphora?



## Discussion

- 1 The pot has no everyday use: it is a very large prestigious object, made as a marker on a grave and designed to display the wealth and status of the dead and their family. Originally made to hold the cremated remains of the dead, by the end of the eighth century BCE, when inhumation (burial) had become the norm, such pots were used as conspicuous markers of the graves.
- 2 The 'belly-handled amphora' (its technical description) marked female graves; male graves were marked by another type of pot – monumental mixing-bowls for wine, known as 'kraters'.
- 3 The elaborate scene on the pot appears to enact the rites associated with death. If analysed, however, the composition of the pot reveals a complex relationship with society: in Greek funeral rites women are prominent, whereas on this pot most of the mourners are men. Other pots suggest that this and other apparently everyday scenes are far from being a simple reflection of society, but rather have a symbolic value reflecting a fictionalised community.

## Objects seen on this track

- |       |                                                                                                       |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 00:25 | **The Dipylon Amphora, from the Dipylon cemetery. Athens. Museum no.804. c.725 BCE                    |
| 01:18 | Cup with warriors, Kerameikos Museum. Museum no.2159. Late eighth century BCE                         |
| 01:24 | Late Geometric amphora, Kerameikos Museum. 760–750 BCE                                                |
| 02:40 | *Geometric krater with funeral procession, Kerameikos Museum; Museum no.990. c.740 BCE                |
| 06:07 | *Geometric amphorae, Eleusis Museum, eighth to sixth centuries BCE                                    |
| 06:19 | *Vase fragment with chariot and warriors. Late eighth century BCE                                     |
| 06:36 | **Proto-Attic krater from Thebes, with sea battle, British Museum. Museum no.1899.2–19.1. 735–720 BCE |
| 07:43 | Aquatic bird amphora, Eleusis. Museum no.741, seventh century BCE                                     |

## Track 5: Homer and Geometric vases

The possible relationship between the pots (Track 4) and Homer is discussed in terms of form and content.

### After viewing the track

#### Question

What relationships between pots and the Homeric poems does Robin Osborne suggest might be significant?

#### Discussion

An obvious connection is 'monumentality': just as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are very large, possibly unique compositions, so large pots such as the Dipylon Amphora appear to be unique in their size and intricacy.



These large pots are limited to a generation (750–725 BCE), after which more ‘domesticated’ artefacts appear in the graves in which groups of (non-individualised) ‘citizens’ appear as soldiers or rowers.

A possible link with Homer is the prevalence of a sequence of scenes on the pots in which individual elements are to be enjoyed in their own right and combined into a monumental whole, ‘piling up incident’, not unlike the scenes of Homeric ‘formulaic’ composition. At the same time, in both pots and poems one scene is marked out from the others; we start to get the interaction between individuals; what looks like the depiction of an incident begins to lead to the development of a story.

### Objects seen on this track

00:54 Dipylon Amphora (see Track 4)

01:20 \*Late Geometric amphora with chariots and horses, Eleusis museum, early seventh century BCE

05:34 \*\*Hydria by the Analatos painter. Museum no.2696 (313). c.675 BCE

## Track 6: Myth and narrative

In this final track Robin Osborne moves onwards in time to the early to middle seventh century BCE to look at a pot that begins to tell a story, a Proto-Attic pot (a development from Geometric) which appears to illustrate two popular Greek stories from myth and legend.

### After viewing the track

#### Question

What are the stories that the pot illustrates? How does it appear to be related to these stories?

#### Discussion

The Proto-Attic pot from Eleusis (found in a cemetery there) depicts, on the neck of the vase, a scene well-known from Homer’s *Odyssey*, Book 9, the blinding by Odysseus and his men of the Cyclops, Polyphemos, by driving a sharp spear or stake into his eye.

*If you have time you should compare the scene depicted on the vase with Homer’s description in the Odyssey 9.371–400, and note similarities and differences between the visual and literary ‘stories’.*

Note especially Robin Osborne’s careful discussion about the possible relations between the two: we cannot automatically assume that the artist copied Homer (or, for that matter, that he was totally unaware of the poem).

The body of the pot depicts another scene from myth, the story of the hero Perseus and the Gorgon Medusa. Note carefully what Robin Osborne says on this track about this story and its possible conceptual relation to death and burial, and the identity of the dead child to which the pot relates.

### Objects seen on this track

00:36 Hydria by the Analatos painter (see Track 5)

01:05 \*\*Amphora by the Polyphemos painter, from the cemetery at Eleusis. Eleusis Museum, c.650 BCE



## Further reading

The following may be of interest to you if you have time in hand, or perhaps you may wish to follow up the references when the course has finished. They are *not* essential reading at this stage.

Boardman, J. (1967) *Pre-classical: From Crete to Archaic Greece*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Hampe, R. and Simon, E. (1981) *The Birth of Greek Art, from the Mycenaean to the Archaic Period*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Hurwit, J.M. (1985) *The Art and Culture of Early Greece, 1100–480 BC*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Osborne, R. (1998) *Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Snodgrass, A. (1998) *Homer and the Artists: Text and Picture in Early Greek Art*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



## DVD2, Section 1, 'The Greek theatre and Persians'

### Presenters:

Oliver Taplin, Professor of Classical Languages and Literature, University of Oxford

Edith Hall, Research Professor in Classics and Drama, Royal Holloway, University of London

Oliver Taplin and Edith Hall are co-directors of the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama in Oxford, an interdisciplinary research project on the international history of ancient drama in performance (<http://www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk/>).

Academic consultant: Felix Budelmann

Producer: John Wyver

This section of the DVD forms part of your work for Block 2, Part 1. It consists of four tracks in which Oliver Taplin and Edith Hall speak about various aspects of the Greek theatre and *Persians*. The first two tracks are particularly relevant for the tasks you are set in Block 2. Tracks 3 and 4 are there to open up further perspectives and to prepare for your work on modern performances in Block 2, Part 4. The tracks are self-contained, and you can watch them separately.

In the block, you are asked to use this DVD together with the *Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization* (set book), and possibly other sources, to do two short pieces of research. The DVD and *OCCC* are complementary, each covering some areas the other leaves to one side. As suggested in Block 2, it may be best to start with the DVD (especially Tracks 1 and 2). In addition, you may want to watch the first two tracks again after doing your work on the *OCCC*, since the *OCCC* provides some information (for instance on the festivals at which the plays were performed) that may give extra depth to the material on the DVD.

One important aspect of this section is that it adds a visual dimension to your mostly text-based work in this part of the block. Visual evidence is crucial for a full understanding of the Greek theatre, both the theatre space and the performances. Unfortunately, our visual sources dating from the fifth century BCE are rather thin. Later sources can add useful information but need to be treated with care. For our purposes there are two main kinds of visual evidence:

#### 1 *The physical remains of the Theatre of Dionysus on the slopes of the Acropolis in Athens*

Footage and discussion of these is provided in Track 1. The main challenge is that much of what we have dates from the fourth century and later. In particular, most of the stonework was added later. At the time *Persians* was written (472 BCE) there were only a few stone seats and there was no distinctly raised stage. However, the basic shape of the theatre, with a semi-circular seating area in the hillside, around a probably circular acting area, was essentially the same as survives today. A ground plan of the theatre is printed in Figure 2.3 in Block 2. As you listen to Oliver Taplin and Edith Hall on Track 1, think about the way they use the visual remains of various periods to talk about the early fifth-century BCE experience.



## 2 Pots

These are discussed in Track 2. Ceramic is durable and therefore one of our chief types of visual evidence for many aspects of fifth-century BCE Athenian culture and society. Unfortunately, only a small sample of pots clearly relates to the theatre, and these do not provide straightforward evidence. Artists did not aim to provide documentary evidence but engaged imaginatively with what they saw in the theatre, and sometimes blended theatre and non-theatre material. As a result, any conclusions drawn from pots must be tentative. Nevertheless, pots can give us unique access to some aspects of the fifth-century BCE theatre, such as masks or costumes. When you watch Track 2, watch out for the dates of pots (are they contemporary to *Persians* or not?) and for the way Oliver Taplin and Edith Hall use them to enrich our understanding of the Greek theatre (what sort of conclusions do they draw, and what sort of conclusions don't they draw? how firmly do they draw them?).

### Track 1: Attending the theatre in Athens

This track discusses the theatre space, the composition of the audience, and reasons for watching tragedies.

See the notes above on dating the remains shown in this track. the following are some points of detail:

- The temple of Dionysus mentioned by Oliver Taplin at timecode 00:58 is located behind the acting area and slightly to the right, as seen from the spectators' seats (in the shot at 00:41, roughly at the right-hand edge of the screen, where there is now a group of trees).
- The building in the background which Oliver Taplin discusses at timecode 01:38 does not survive intact. Plays from late 460 BCE onwards refer regularly to some variety of building that would have formed the backdrop to the action, with a door through which characters would sometimes enter and exit. This building would have been placed behind the acting area, facing the audience, and was in the first place probably made mostly of wood. As Oliver Taplin points out, this building may well not have been constructed when *Persians* was first performed in 472 BCE.
- The high-backed seats in the front rows (e.g. at timecodes 04:47 and 06:01) are seats of honour reserved for dignitaries, such as the Priest of Dionysus.
- The quotation at timecode 08:27 is from Aristophanes' comedy *Frogs* (lines 1009–10), where 'Euripides' (as a character in the play) lists the characteristics that make a poet admirable: 'intelligence, admonition, and that we make the people in the cities better'. Similar statements can be found elsewhere in ancient discussions of literature.

### Track 2: Actors in Greek theatre

This track is about actors and acting in the fifth-century BCE theatre, covering topics such as acting styles, costumes and masks. It focuses in particular on the evidence from pots. The most important pots shown are as follows:

- 04:05 Attic krater, known today as 'Basle dancers', early fifth century BCE. Basle, Antikenmuseum und Skulpturhalle BS415
- 05:02 Attic volute krater, known today as 'Pronomos Vase' (after one of the figures on the vase), late fifth century BCE. Naples, Museo Nazionale 3240



- 07:15 Fourth-century BCE vase, with inscriptions 'Persians' and 'Darius'. Naples, Museo Nazionale 3253.
- 07:30 Fragmentary Attic jar, mid fifth century BCE, Corinth Museum T114
- 09:53 Apulian bell krater, early fourth century BCE. Würzburg H5697. This vase was probably inspired, more or less immediately, by Aristophanes' comedy *Thesmophoriazusae*.

### Track 3: How the plays survived

This track moves beyond the exercise you are doing and gives a brief overview of how Greek tragedy, and in particular *Persians*, survived from the fifth century to the modern period. If you are interested in this topic, which is not discussed in any further detail in this course, you may wish to look at Garland, R. (2004) *Surviving Greek Tragedy*, London: Duckworth, Chapters 2–5.

Details of stills:

- 00:50 Papyrus Berlin 9875. This is a text of a piece called *Persians* not by Aeschylus, but by the late fifth-century playwright Timotheus. The papyrus dates from the second half of the fourth century BCE. It is chosen as an illustration here because it is one of the earliest substantial papyri to survive. We have enormous numbers of often small papyrus fragments of literary and non-literary texts, most of them preserved in the dry sands of Egypt.
- 01:34 Papyrus Oxyrhynchus XXII 2334, third/fourth century CE. This is one of several small scraps of Aeschylus (from *Seven against Thebes* in this case) that survive on papyrus. Oxyrhynchus is a city in Egypt, where a large number of papyri has been found.
- 02:30 Page from the manuscript Florentinus Laurentianus 32.9, kept in Florence. This is the most important medieval manuscript of Aeschylus, dating from the tenth century CE. Comparison with the papyrus fragment earlier on illustrates a major change in handwriting. While antiquity wrote exclusively in capital letters, medieval manuscripts were written in minuscules, saving space on the page.
- 04:02 Page from *Aeschyli tragoediae sex* ('Aeschylus' six tragedies'), Venice: in aedibus Aldi et Andreae Socii, 1518. The 'Aldine' edition of Aeschylus was the first printed edition of his works. The Aldine Press in Venice, started by Aldus Manutius at end of the fifteenth century, was one of the most influential presses of the time. Many ancient texts were first printed there. The Greek fonts are clearly the precursors of fonts we use today, but still bear resemblance to the medieval book-hands.
- 04:41 Page from *Aeschyli ... tragœdiæ sex ... e Graeco in Latinum sermonem ... conversæ, per Ioannem Sanravium* ('Aeschylus' six tragedies', translated from Greek into Latin, by Ioannes Sanravius), Basle: Ioannes Oporinus, 1555. This is the first translation of *Persians* (among the other surviving plays by Aeschylus) into Latin. Since Latin, unlike Greek, was read by all educated people at the time, it made Aeschylus more widely accessible.
- 06:01 *The Battle of Lepanto, 7th October 1571*, oil on canvas, by the Italian painter Luca Cambiaso (1527–85). The figure in the foreground is Neptune/Poseidon. The Turks are fleeing from the victorious Holy League. This is one of several paintings of the battle of Lepanto.



## Track 4: Modern productions of *Persians*

This track discusses *Persians* in the twentieth century. It shows, among other things, that *Persians* has been performed in a range of contexts and with different agendas (and something similar is true for many ancient texts). This material cannot serve as evidence for how *Persians* was performed in the fifth century BCE, but you may want to ask yourself how engagement with twentieth-century performance may add to your understanding of the play. There will be more discussion of modern productions, with references to further sources of information, in Block 2, Part 4, 'Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*'.

The footage of productions of Aeschylus' *Persians* shown in this track is:

performance footage of a production directed by Karolos Koun, recorded in 1987. Karolos Koun (1908–87), was one of the most influential Greek theatre directors of the twentieth century. In 1942, he founded the Theatro Technis company, with which he produced, among other things, numerous ancient tragedies and comedies, both indoors and in open-air theatres. The Theatro Technis performed *Persians* several times, first during 1965–67, and later in 1976 and 1987–88;

rehearsal footage of a production directed by Peter Sellars in Edinburgh, 1993. The new version (rather than a translation) of *Persians* was written by Peter Auletta, setting the play in modern Baghdad in the context of the bombing of Iraq by US forces in 1991. The production prompted strong opposition, especially in the USA. Peter Sellars (b.1957) is an American director of theatre, opera and television programmes. He produced two other Greek tragedies, Sophocles' *Ajax* in 1986 and Euripides' *Children of Heracles* in 2002/2003, using a cast of refugees.

## DVD2, Section 2, 'Plan reading'

Voiceover: James Robson

Academic consultants: Lisa Nevett and James Robson

Producer: John Wyver

As you work through Block 2, Part 2, on the Acropolis, you will need to be able to relate the two-dimensional plans of buildings shown in the Illustrations Book to the three-dimensional structures which they are designed to represent. This section is designed to help you do this. It consists of just one track. The aim here is to help you become comfortable with plan reading, not to discuss individual temples and their architecture. You will see images and/or plans of the following:

The Temple of Themis at Rhamnous in north-east Attica

The Athenian Treasury at Delphi

The Temple of Poseidon at Sounion at the southern-most tip of Attica

The Temple of Hera II at Paestum in southern Italy (formerly known as the Temple of Poseidon, but the majority of scholars now believe the temple was probably dedicated to Hera, as was another – smaller – temple close by)

The Acropolis and its buildings

## Glossary of terms used in the discussion

stylobate: the raised base of a temple

naos (plural *naoi*): enclosed space inside a temple housing the cult image



## DVD2, Section 3, 'The Acropolis and its buildings'

Voiceover: Felix Budelmann

Academic consultants: Felix Budelmann and James Robson

Producer: John Wyver

This section rounds off your study of the Acropolis. It is designed to help you review the material you have studied and to develop a more complete visual understanding of the Acropolis and its buildings.

The section introduces little new material. However, in Track 1, there is footage and a very brief discussion of two important Athenian sites that are little covered in the block: the Dipylon Gate and Kerameikos Cemetery, which you have already seen on DVD1, and the *agora* (marketplace). Even though these sites are not a core aspect of Block 2, we have included them because they put the Acropolis into context in two ways. They give you a fuller sense of Athenian civic sites other than the Acropolis, and they are situated on the Panathenaic Way, the route taken by the Panathenaic procession, ending up on the Acropolis. Before watching, you may want to have another look at Figure 2.12 to remind yourself of the topography.

Much of the material is already familiar to you from your work on the block, and we give details below only of some new material. There is no exercise linked to this section, but you may wish to note down aspects that you find difficult and to look at the relevant paragraphs in the block again.

### Track 1: The Panathenaia and the Panathenaic Way

After a brief introduction you will see remains first of the Dipylon Gate and the nearby Kerameikos Cemetery, and then of the agora, including the Hephaesteion.

The vases shown briefly in the introductory part are:

- 00:20 Attic black-figure amphora, c.540–530 BCE, in the style of Exekias, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
- 00:31 Attic black-figure amphora, c.535–38 BCE, by Nikosthenes, Museum of Cycladic and Ancient Greek Art, Athens
- 00:35 Attic black-figure amphora depicting runners in a race, 600–550 BCE. Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

### Track 2: The Acropolis

This track covers:

- The Propylaea
- The temple of Athena Nike
- The statue of Athena Promachos
- The temple of Athena Polias
- The Erechtheion
- Altar of Athena

- 02:59 The statue, shown here to give you a sense of what the original statue of Athena Promachos looked like, is a Roman first-century CE copy found at Herculaneum, and now in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico in Naples. The Promachos statue itself is lost.



### **Track 3: The Parthenon**

This track focuses on the Parthenon, its design and various kinds of statuary: the pediments, the metopes, the frieze, and the statue of Athena Parthenos.

02:02 The reconstruction of the lost Athena Parthenos statue is a modern plaster cast (c. 1970) in the Royal Ontario Museum, museum no.962.228.16.

### **Track 4: The Parthenon pediments and metopes**

This track looks in more detail at the two Parthenon pediments and some of the Parthenon metopes. This track was filmed mostly in the British Museum in London.

### **Track 5: The Parthenon frieze**

Finally, the last track is devoted to the Parthenon frieze. This track, too, was filmed mostly in the British Museum in London.